

Page Denied

Next 10 Page(s) In Document Denied

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FBI examines security probe by top arms control officials

By Bill Gertz
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The FBI is investigating allegations that top officials of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, including Director Kenneth Adelman, acted improperly in the handling of a security probe of an agency employee, according to government officials.

Officials close to the investigation, who declined to be named, said Mr. Adelman, who resigned July 30, and Michael Guhin, ACDA counselor and the No. 3 man at the arms control agency, are the focus of the FBI probe.

The FBI investigation is only one

of several security probes targeted at the arms control agency, an independent agency that has come under fire from critics who have charged it with failing to adequately protect U.S. secrets.

One government official and a former administration official, who were both questioned recently by the FBI, said federal agents are trying to determine if Mr. Adelman and Mr. Guhin "obstructed justice" during an internal investigation last year of Kathleen Strang, an ACDA nuclear non-proliferation analyst.

The officials said the FBI investigation began in July. An FBI spokesman would neither confirm nor deny the existence of the probe.

Mr. Adelman characterized the report of a new FBI investigation as "totally irresponsible and entirely wrong. ... There were people involved with the case who thought my decision was wrong. They have planted stories with The Washington Times before, and they were shown to be wrong. And they have planted this one, and I'm sure it will be shown to be wrong."

Mr. Adelman said he called for an FBI investigation of the Strang case in 1985, but the probe was called off for lack of evidence.

An ACDA spokesman said this week, however, that an FBI investiga-

see FBI, page A8

W.T. 2 Sept 87

FBI

From page A1

tion "may get under way in the very near future." He declined to provide any further details.

Mr. Adelman said he was unaware of any ongoing FBI investigation, but added, "If there is an investigation by anybody, it is by my invitation. . . . It is preposterous to say that all of a sudden there is an investigation going on about wrongdoing by myself and Mr. Guhin."

Mr. Guhin, through a spokesman, declined comment.

Ms. Strang, who was caught removing thousands of top-secret intelligence documents from ACDA safes without authorization in June 1985, was the subject of an 18-month security probe. In November 1986, Mr. Adelman suspended her from the agency without pay for six months, revoked her access to classified intelligence documents and placed her on probation for one year.

Ms. Strang returned to ACDA as an archivist in July and her top-secret security clearance was reinstated, although she has not been permitted access to intelligence material.

"I asked anybody who had any information on the Kathy Strang case to come forward and present it to me," Mr. Adelman said. "Some did and some didn't, but it was at their discretion. I must have read thousands of pages of evidence on the case."

He acknowledged that "some people disagreed with the ultimate decision, but no one disagreed on the procedures used and the fairness of the procedures."

But the officials said the FBI is looking into the role played by Mr. Adelman and Mr. Guhin in handling a second series of security violations against Ms. Strang that were discovered in September 1985.

Mr. Adelman and Mr. Guhin allegedly sought to prevent U.S. intelligence agencies and the FBI from investigating the case after that date. "They wanted to keep the investigation within the agency [ACDA]," the former administration official said.

Included among the alleged second series of violations by Ms. Strang is a charge that she passed a highly classified intelligence document relating to Pakistan's nuclear capabilities to South Korean government officials during a 1984 conference in Asia.

Mr. Adelman said the action was not a clear violation on Ms. Strang's part. It wasn't clear that the transfer wasn't authorized or that it involved classified information, he said.

The material was highly technical, Mr. Adelman said. "I looked at the material and couldn't under-

stand a word of it," he said. "One intelligence agency said it was [classified] and another said it was not."

According to an ACDA statement issued last year, Mr. Adelman ordered a "further review" of the Strang case relating to the allegations of passing secrets to foreign government officials.

But the ACDA statement noted, "The possibility of any damage from the paper which was provided to Allied officials was so remote that further investigation was not warranted."

However, the government and administration officials said Morton Abramowitz, State Department intelligence director, wrote a memorandum to Mr. Adelman on May 12 of this year, stating the information supplied to the Koreans had compromised U.S. intelligence sources and damaged national security.

Critics also point out that Ms. Strang's case appears no different from that of Samuel Loring Morison, a civilian naval employee impris-

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oned on espionage charges in 1985 for passing a top-secret U.S. satellite photo to a British defense weekly.

Central to the investigation are State Department security records allegedly implicating ACDA officials in the mishandling of the Strang case. The records were retained by State after an investigator posted to ACDA returned to the department's Office of Diplomatic Security.

ACDA legal advisers have been reluctant to turn over to federal investigators documents pertaining to agency officials' role in the Strang case, the government officials said.

The files currently are the subject of an internal struggle and may be returned to ACDA, the officials said. But, they said, the move raises questions about the propriety of ACDA officials gaining access to information that may implicate them in wrongdoing.

Mr. Adelman has defended ACDA's reputation as "no worse than any other agency when it comes to security."

In a series of written answers to security questions posed by the House Foreign Affairs Committee in June, he stated that ACDA has taken several steps to improve its security.

However, Mr. Adelman acknowledged that at least 10 security

vie' tions, one involving top-secret information, had been found at ACDA since the beginning of the year.

Regarding the Strang case, he said, "A violation of Section 794 of Title 18 [an espionage statute] requires a finding of intent to injure the United States. Nothing in the Strang case indicated any such intent."

In a June 10 letter, Rep. Robert K. Dornan, California Republican, asked Attorney General Edwin Meese III to investigate ACDA officials' handling of the Strang case.

Mr. Dornan said a State Department security agent, Bernie Indahl, had found that "at least two high-ranking ACDA officials" knew about Ms. Strang's security violations and "condoned her actions."

According to documents obtained from congressional investigators probing the affair for the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which oversees ACDA, Mr. Indahl was blocked by Mr. Adelman and Mr. Guhin from pursuing a series of security violations at ACDA by top agency officials, including Mr. Guhin.

Besides the FBI, Congress' General Accounting Office began investigating ACDA security in June under a request from House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Dante Fascell, Florida Democrat, and Rep. William Broomfield, Michigan Republican.

The GAO is probing the Strang case, ACDA officials' handling of it and the general state of the agency's security.

Also, the current State Department funding bill contains an amendment calling for establishment of a State Department inspector general for ACDA, whose first duty would be to report to Congress on security problems at the agency. The bill is in conference.

Four of the ACDA's top officials, including Mr. Adelman, have resigned since June, fueling speculation the agency is in disarray over its security problems.

David Emery, the ACDA deputy director, resigned three weeks ago but will not leave the agency until Jan. 1. Michael Mobbs, assistant director for strategic programs, and Lewis Dunn, assistant director for nuclear weapons and control who at one time was Ms. Strang's supervisor, also have resigned.

Although he formally resigned as director, Mr. Adelman is not scheduled to leave the agency until mid-October, or following a possible superpower summit meeting.

Ms. Strang, who could not be reached for comment, sued ACDA in federal court last year to learn the identities of those who testified against her in the investigation and also to obtain the release of classified documents in the case. The case is still pending.

Page Denied

Next 11 Page(s) In Document Denied

FEDERAL DIARY/OBITUARIES/COMICS D1

9/23/85

THE WASHINGTON POST

JACK ANDERSON and DALE VAN ATTA

U.S. Hinders Pakistan's Bomb Plans

If Pakistan's dictator, Gen. Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, decides tomorrow that he wants to explode a nuclear device, it will be only "a matter of weeks" before he can do it.

This is the secret assessment of a top CIA official. In fact, the only reason Zia has not taken the final few steps and started producing the long-dreaded "Islamic bomb" is his desire to keep U.S. military aid flowing in, suggested the high-level Central Intelligence Agency source.

A private letter from President Reagan last September made this clear to Zia, warning that the nuclear weapons issue "could undermine all that we are trying to achieve." The president urged Zia to limit the uranium enrichment being done at Pakistan's heavily guarded plant at Kahuta to the 5 percent of U-235 necessary for reactor fuel.

This would be well below the percentage needed for weapons. Last November, the Pakistani foreign minister visited Washington and assured Reagan that the enrichment lid was being observed.

Our intelligence sources confirm that the Pakistani nuclear program has slowed since Reagan's letter. The key to the situation is the activity of Dr. Abdul Qadar Khan, the Western-trained Pakistani who allegedly stole nuclear secrets from the Dutch in the 1970s and now heads the nuclear bomb development program.

In the past year, Khan has diversified his military work to include such secret projects as development of a Chinese-style hand-held antiaircraft missile. He spends "a great deal of time" on the nuclear bomb program, however.

From intelligence documents and other sources,

we've pieced together this picture of the Pakistani nuclear weapon effort:

- Technology exchange with China since at least 1980 has brought Pakistan to the point where it could have a small nuclear arsenal in less than two years. Chinese scientists have been to Kahuta to study the centrifuge technique that Pakistan stole from the Europeans a decade ago. And there is evidence that China gave Pakistan information about the actual design of a Hiroshima-sized bomb that the Chinese have successfully tested.

- The Pakistanis' own nuclear bomb is described as crude but effective. It consists of a sphere of enriched uranium about six inches in diameter, suspended within a steel sphere about 13 inches in diameter. This is surrounded by more than 100 pounds of conventional "shaped charges," and the whole disaster is encased in curved metal plates to form a 21-inch sphere. The shaped charges implode, compressing the uranium core until it reaches a critical density and blows up.

- Pakistan's bomb builders have tried to modernize their weapon through the illegal acquisition of Western materials. They succeeded in buying a high-speed Swedish X-ray machine that is crucial to the implosion technique they're using. But the acquisition was discovered in time to stop delivery of the operating manual and the dispatch to Islamabad of a Swedish expert.

- Perhaps most scary of all is Libya's involvement in the Pakistani bomb. Libya's petrodollars have helped finance the effort, and the CIA is afraid Pakistan would be obliged to share its nuclear technology with Libya as compensation.

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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Denied